
Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line

I Wor Kuen

Soviet Social Imperialism and the International Situation Today

First Published: *Getting Together*, Vol. VII, No. 2, July 1976.

Reprinted: In the pamphlet, *Countries want independence, Nations want liberation, People want revolution!*, n.d. [1977]

Transcription, Editing and Markup: Paul Saba

Copyright: This work is in the Public Domain under the [Creative Commons Common Deed](#). You can freely copy, distribute and display this work; as well as make derivative and commercial works.

Please credit the Encyclopedia of Anti-Revisionism On-Line as your source, include the url to this work, and note any of the transcribers, editors & proofreaders above.

Pivotal to understanding the world situation today is grasping the nature of the Soviet Union. Is it an ally of national independence, national liberation and revolution or is it a mortal enemy? Do we extol the Soviet Union as an example of socialism or expose it as a fascist and imperialist superpower?

Getting Together's stand on these questions is unequivocal: the Soviet Union, once ruled by the proletariat, is now under the rule of a monopoly capitalist class that has fully restored capitalism. The Soviet Union is fascist at home and social-imperialist abroad, socialist in words and imperialist in deeds. It is a superpower and contends with the U.S. for the domination of the world. Everywhere the Soviet social-imperialists are enemies of the masses of people.

In this editorial we wish to outline our view of the Soviet Union as a capitalist superpower, the significance of this development for the people of the world and finally, the tasks for the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. on this question.

How did the Soviet Union become an imperialist superpower?

From the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 to the 1950's, the people of the Soviet Union under the leadership of their communist party, the Communist Party of the

Soviet Union (CPSU) led first by V.I. Lenin and then by Joseph Stalin, made momentous strides in building the first workers' state. The Soviet people set a shining example to the whole world of what economic, political, cultural and moral progress the laboring people can make when they throw off their exploiters and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Soviet people and the CPSU valiantly defended socialism and fought against the many attempts of international capitalism to overthrow or subvert the Soviet Union. Right after the revolution, the capitalist powers invaded Russia in an attempt to destroy socialism. But all the various attempts of the imperialists failed – the most outstanding example is that of the successful Soviet resistance against Nazi aggression in World War II.

At the same time that the Soviet people defended socialism from external imperialist aggression, they conducted a sharp battle against an even more dangerous enemy. The revisionists, capitalist elements masked under Marxist words, represented a mortal threat right within socialism. Their objective, like that of the foreign imperialists, was to overthrow the dictatorship of the proletariat and restore capitalism.

The battle between the two roads, that of socialism or that of capitalism, is not decided once and for all with the overthrow of the rule of the former exploiting class, but rather remains throughout the entire historical period of socialism.

The CPSU scored major victories against the revisionists to keep to the socialist road. Trotsky was soundly defeated as was a whole pack of careerists, opportunists, bureaucrats and self-seekers. These bourgeois elements were right within the party and government and aimed to restore capitalism in the Soviet Union.

In 1945, the Soviet Union emerged triumphant from the Second World War, and was in a position of unprecedented strength. However, certain circumstances arose which facilitated the rise and eventual triumph of revisionism in the CPSU; under these conditions, the socialist Soviet Union turned into its opposite – a monolithic capitalist state.

The external source of revisionism in the Soviet Union was the surrender to imperialist pressure, while the internal source of revisionism was the existence of bourgeois influence. These are the political and ideological sources of the new bourgeois elements. Externally the U.S. imperialists threatened nuclear blackmail of the Soviet Union, invoking the fear of atomic destruction. At the same time, the U.S. imperialists promoted reformist illusions that capitalism could be peacefully transformed. Capitulation to these pressures leads to a general abandonment of revolutionary ideals and principles.

Within the Soviet Union, the revisionists took advantage of the death of Stalin, who had led many fights against revisionism in the Soviet Union, in 1953. These revisionist elements inevitably emerge under socialism; the revisionists and bureaucrats in the government, careerists in the party, unreformed bourgeois intellectuals and technicians, corrupt administrators, militarists in the armed forces are produced because of the remaining inequalities in socialism that are inherited from bourgeois society. These inequalities exist right in the economic basis of socialism. In the areas of ownership, relations among people, and distribution, there still exists bourgeois right which gives certain material privileges to some. New capitalist elements are engendered from the soil of bourgeois right.

These elements found their political representative in the person of Khrushchov who by 1956 launched an all out offensive against socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. He attacked the record of Stalin and the whole history of socialism in the Soviet Union in order to overturn the advances made by the working people. He promoted the “theories” of the “state of the whole people” and “party of the whole people” to destroy the workers’ state and the workers’ party. Led by Khrushchov, the revisionists soon took over the entire leadership of the party. “Nearly 70% of the members of the central committee of the CPSU who were elected at its 19th Congress in 1952 were purged in the course of the 20th and 22nd Congresses held respectively in 1956 and 1961. And nearly 50% of the members of the central committee who were elected at the 20th Congress were purged at the time of the 22nd Congress.” (*On Khrushchov’s Phoney Communism*, Peking 1964)

The triumph of revisionism in the Soviet Union, the seizure of state power by the revisionists means that the bourgeoisie controls state power and not the proletariat. And what do the revisionists do with state power in their hands? They restore capitalism in an all-round way.

Mao Tsetung has incisively summarized this experience and drawn a very important lesson on the dictatorship of the proletariat. He said as early as 1963:

Class struggle, the struggle for production and scientific experiment are the three great revolutionary movements for building a mighty socialist country. These movements are a sure guarantee that Communists will be free from bureaucracy and immune against revisionism and dogmatism, and will forever remain invincible. They are a reliable guarantee that the proletariat will be able to unite with the broad working masses and realize a democratic dictatorship. If, in the absence of these movements, the landlords, rich peasants, counter-revolutionaries, bad elements and ogres of all kinds were allowed to crawl out, while our cadres were to shut their eyes to all this and in many cases fail even to differentiate between the enemy and ourselves but were to collaborate with the enemy and become corrupted and demoralized, if our cadres were thus dragged into the enemy camp or the enemy were able to sneak into our ranks, and if many of our workers, peasants, and

intellectuals were left defenseless against both the soft and the hard tactics of the enemy, then it would not take long, perhaps only several years or a decade, or several decades at the most, before a counter-revolutionary restoration on a national scale inevitably occurred, the Marxist-Leninist party would undoubtedly become a revisionist party or a fascist party and the whole of China would change its colour. (from *On Khrushchov's Phoney Communism*, p. 72)

Soviet Union today

The Soviet Union today is not the red color of revolution but is counter-revolutionary through and through.

At home, there is state monopoly capitalism. Brezhnev openly advocates operating on the profit motive. He proclaims that the Soviet capitalists should "allocate each ruble to the place where we can be compensated by two, three and even ten rubles tomorrow ... All of us, from the central to local organizations, must learn the complex art of money making. That is nothing to be ashamed of." (Brezhnev, *On Basic Problems of the CPSU Economic Policy at the Present State*) The salaries of the managers of the big enterprises are 15-20 times higher than those of the average workers.

Wage slavery prevails in the Soviet Union and is legally authorized and enforced. "The Regulations Governing Socialist State Productive Enterprises" published recently in the Soviet Union openly stipulates that a manager of an enterprise "has the right to recruit and dismiss personnel" and "has the right to fix the workers' rate of wages and bonuses." This is an unabashed confession that wage labor is bought and sold in the Soviet Union today.

There is widespread unemployment, as with any capitalist society. It is reported that there have been 6 million industrial workers without jobs every year since 1970. There is increasing taxation: in 1960 state employees paid an average of 84 rubles in taxes. This increased to 158 rubles by 1973. According to Soviet yearbooks, the retail prices are also soaring. For example, between the years 1970-73 state retail prices of meat and poultry rose 29%, animal oils by 28%, vegetables by 23% and flour by 48%. These are all common characteristics of capitalist society.

In order to serve its imperialist ambitions, the new capitalists in the Soviet Union have militarized the economy: 60% of industry is directly or indirectly related to the military. In 1960 the Soviet revisionists spent 13.1% of its national income on military expenditures, but by 1974 this had increased to 19.6%. This proportion surpasses pre-war Nazi Germany (19%) as well as U.S. imperialism even at its periods of conducting wars of aggression in Korea (15%) and Vietnam (10%).

The Soviet military itself is immense. It has 4.2 million personnel in active service, almost twice the number of the U.S., and has another 25 million in reserves. It has close to 800 submarine guided nuclear missiles and over 1600 land-based ICBM's. Its naval forces are close to, if not surpassing those of the U.S. It has close to half a million men occupying countries in Eastern Europe.

These military forces are not to fulfill the defense needs of a socialist country, but rather are the forces of a mighty imperialist superpower aiming for domination of the world.

Some may ask if the USSR has any profit in its foreign expansion. It certainly does. It bleeds dry the Eastern European countries, just as the U.S. does in Western Europe. The USSR is also aiming to make money in the third world. It is establishing "joint stock companies" that are no different from the U.S. monopoly capitalist corporations.

From its so-called foreign aid and arms deals too, the Soviet Union makes huge profits. The Soviets use "foreign aid" as an imperialist tool just as does the U.S. bourgeoisie. The chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee of the Soviet Union, S.A. Skachov, bluntly stated that "the Soviet economic assistance is no charity," that "the technical assistance of the Soviet Union to the developing countries has served to promote the growth of our foreign trade and increase our equipment export," and that "this has added to the possibility of meeting the increasing requirements of the Soviet national economy." In other words, the purpose of Soviet aid is not to assist the developing countries but to help propel Soviet capitalist needs.

This is clearly seen in terms of Soviet "foreign aid." Soviet loans for example must first of all be used to buy Soviet machinery and equipment usually at prices 20-30% higher than in the world market. Furthermore, products turned out by the Soviet-aided projects must first be used as debt repayments – usually at prices 10-15% lower than the world market. Therefore a Soviet loan can often produce a huge profit 4-5 times more than the original loan. By the time that India has cleared all its present debts to the Soviet Union, Indian journalists estimate that she would have paid back 565.9% of her original loan.

The Soviets have also conjured up elaborate imperialist theories to justify their exploitation of other countries. Brezhnev propounds that all countries should "take part in the international division of labor" which means that the Soviet Union, which is developing "the material basis for communism," builds industry while other countries subordinate themselves to the Soviet Union's economic plan. (Brezhnev, "The Triumph of Soviet Democracy") This amounts to industrialized Russia and underdeveloped Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The Soviets also have rationales to interfere and subvert national liberation struggles. They humbly, proclaim that "it is universally recognized" that "without the assistance of

the USSR” the national liberation forces would not achieve “success.” (B.N. Ponomaryov, Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, “Following Lenin’s Course Towards Socialism,” April 22, 1974)

What we are dealing with then, is the USSR as a superpower under the mask of “socialism.” The revisionist leaders of the CPSU run state monopoly capitalism and exploit the working people both at home and internationally, while aiming at world hegemony.

The significance of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union to the present world situation

The restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union has serious implications for the people of the world. The Soviet Union is a big country with a large population and has a highly developed economy with international connections. It is more than a capitalist state, for it is one of the two superpowers of the world. In contention with the other superpower, the U.S. it strives to gain domination over all other countries and nations, including lesser capitalist states. The two superpowers are the enemies of the people of the world.

The world’s people have already seen how a superpower operates. Following World War II, the U.S. became the number one exploiter and oppressor of people everywhere. It attacked the third world and bullied even its own “allies” such as Japan and Western Europe. Objectively, a broad united front could be forged which included the international proletariat, masses of people in the U.S., the socialist countries, the oppressed nations of the world and even the lesser capitalist powers.

But the rise of the Soviet Union as a superpower alters this situation. It is only correct now to see forging a broad united front against both superpowers, which must include all the various countries fighting for independence, nations for liberation and people for revolution. The proletariat must support whatever is in the interests of the masses of the world’s people and helps to defeat the imperialism of both superpowers.

This means that the proletariat must support activities such as the liberation movements of the African people as in Azania and Zimbabwe and condemn the direct interference of the Soviet Union in Angola where they incited a tragic civil war. Several months after the end of the civil war, the Soviet Union continued to support over 10,000 mercenary troops on Angolan soil.

The proletariat must also support those activities of the third world countries to defend their national independence and strengthen their economic position, for these struggles too help isolate and weaken the two superpowers. We support Egypt’s decision to throw out the Soviets from their country as well as the oil exporting countries’ attempts to

control their own natural resources. Actions should be encouraged too such as the Iranian government's attempt to make the Indian Ocean a zone which would prohibit U.S. and Soviet atomic weapons in the area.

There are also contradictions between the lesser capitalist countries and the superpowers. The attempts of these countries to develop their ties with the third world such as the recent UNCTAD Conference are positive steps towards breaking away from the domination of the superpowers. At the same time, the recent interference of both superpowers in the internal affairs of countries such as Portugal and Italy should be exposed.

The people's revolutionary struggles for self-determination, national liberation and socialism are every day winning more and more victories and must be resolutely supported.

Both superpowers are enemies of the world's people: Soviet Union most pernicious

Both superpowers are enemies of the people of the world and both are vicious and bloodthirsty exploiters. At the same time that we oppose both superpowers, we must recognize that, of the two, the Soviet Union is the even more pernicious foe.

Why is this?

The Soviet Union relative to the U.S. is a rising imperialist power. The U.S. suffered irreversible defeats in Indochina. It is being forced to retreat all around the globe. The Soviet Union on the other hand is even more aggressive and ambitious. It hopes to fill in everywhere the U.S. leaves or is weakened.

At home, the U.S. is beset with monumental economic, social and political difficulties. It finds little support for its imperialist activities. The Soviet Union is also internally weak. It is meeting more and more resistance from the people of the Soviet Union. In the economic field it is still weaker than the U.S. But it has the advantage of state monopoly capitalism which it can more directly use for its aggressive plans. It imposes a fascist dictatorship on the people at home to prevent any opposition.

The Soviet revisionists have put millions of Russians into concentration camps and "mental asylums" to crush opposition to fascist rule. The director of Soviet internal security himself admitted that there are over 600 scientists in his bureau whose purpose is to find new ways to physically and psychologically suppress the people.

The Soviet Union furthermore is a social-imperialist superpower. It masquerades under the cover of Marxism and socialism. It pretends to be an ally of revolution, but nothing

could be further from the truth.

The U.S. is like the thug on the street whom you know wants to beat you over the head to get your wallet; the Soviet Union is the backstabbing “friend” who waits to get into your home to steal your food.

Factors for both war and revolution are on the rise

The basic contradictions in the world are sharply intensifying. The factors for both war and revolution are rising.

The contradiction between the superpowers on the one hand and the people of the world on the other is developing in a positive direction. Great victories have been won by the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America against colonialism, imperialism and hegemonism. The countries of the second world, the lesser capitalist countries, are also uniting against superpower subversion and interference. Everywhere, there is a growing Marxist-Leninist movement with new genuine communist parties emerging to lead the various struggles.

The world situation is excellent and is developing in a direction favorable to the people of the world.

The contradiction between the two superpowers is also intensifying and the danger of war between the two increasing. Imperialism means world war. The U.S. and the USSR compete with one another over the robbery of the world. The objective of world domination leads them to direct contention. This contention inevitably leads to war and all people must prepare themselves for this danger. Thus we believe that the best way to characterize the concrete situation in the world today is that factors for both war and revolution are on the rise.

Of the two superpowers, the Soviet Union is the more dangerous and the main source of the war danger. The U.S. is on the defensive, while the Soviet Union is more aggressive and ambitious.

The aggressive nature of Soviet social-imperialism in its contention with U.S. imperialism is evident in such places as Angola, the Middle East, Portugal and Cyprus. The vastly aggressive nature of the Soviet Union is also evident in the fast pace of its arms buildups and war preparations. For instance, in Europe, the strategic objective of superpower contention, the Soviet Union is carefully preparing for combat. Seventy-five percent of Soviet troops abroad are deployed in the Warsaw Pact countries and recent military exercises between Soviet troops and Warsaw Pact bloc troops have been noticeably on the increase.

The Soviet Union makes a lot of noise about “detente” and the relaxation of tensions between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, but there can be no such thing. Detente in fact is simply a cover for the real situation – the increasing hostilities between the two superpowers. It is used to disarm the masses, leaving them unprepared for war and allowing the imperialists to have a free rein.

The relationship between war and revolution is very close. The two world wars gave rise to the great October Russian Revolution of 1917 and the Chinese revolution of 1949. The earth shaking revolutionary torrent in the third world during the 1950’s and 1960’s greatly weakened U.S. imperialism and assisted in preventing war against the socialist countries. In this era, whether war gives rise to revolution or revolution prevents war, revolution will be the final outcome.

Any force that tries to oppose or go against the tide of the surging revolutionary struggle will in the end be defeated. Without a doubt it is the millions upon millions of people of the world who decide the future and not one or the other superpower. “To eliminate the inevitability of war, it is necessary to abolish imperialism.” (Stalin, *Economic Problems in the USSR*) And, if the superpowers launch a world war, they will only hasten their overthrow.

Our tasks today

The U.S. revolutionary movement must fully appreciate the implications that the factors for both war and revolution are on the rise. The contradiction between the two superpowers and the people of the world is sharpening and the situation is favorable for the people to advance in their struggles. At the same time the contradiction between the two superpowers is also sharpening and leading towards world war, with the Soviet Union the most dangerous source of a new war.

We believe that this situation requires heightening revolutionary work in all areas, for such work is the only way to combat the growing danger of war. Only revolution can prevent world war.

There are implications for three areas in particular which we wish to note:

1) in party building, the current world situation necessitates that the U.S. communist movement intensify its efforts to distinguish between genuine and sham Marxism-Leninism and develop a correct line around which communists can be united. The formation of this party is the cornerstone for furthering the U.S. revolution and for getting prepared here for the growing danger of war. It is an illusion to think that qualitative advances in either area can occur without such a party.

We must push ahead our theoretical work and learn from the history and current experiences of the international working class movement and integrate these lessons with the concrete realities of the U.S. revolution. This theoretical work is particularly important in these times due to the upheaval in the world and sharpening struggle everywhere.

At the same time, the communist movement must deepen its ties with the working class and oppressed masses in the U.S. by bringing further their advanced elements into the ranks of the communist movement and expanding communist influence over broad numbers of people.

2) in our work around the world situation, we must promote proletarian internationalism by winning the working class to support all the various struggles that weaken and isolate the principal enemy in the world, the two superpowers. This means resolutely supporting and encouraging the countries fighting for independence, nations for liberation and people for revolution.

Furthermore with the danger of a new world war on the rise, we must point out this danger, that its source comes from the contention of the two imperialist superpowers and that the only way to combat the threat of war is to persevere in making revolution.

While maintaining that both superpowers are enemies, we must intensify our struggle in exposing the Soviet Union. This means that in our educational work on world events we must place emphasis on exposing the fascist nature of the Soviet Union, its insidious social imperialism and its menace as the most dangerous source for a new world war in the contention with the U.S. for world hegemony.

Special emphasis must be directed against the Soviet Union because of its particularly aggressive and ambitious nature and because it masks as an ally of revolution. U.S. imperialism is relatively well-known and it has difficulty executing its various plans, but the same cannot be said of the Soviet Union. While the people are becoming rapidly more conscious of Soviet imperialism, it is still deceptive – hence the necessity to stress the exposure of the Soviet Union's social-imperialism.

And 3) in our revolutionary work in the U.S. we must expose and defeat the counter-revolutionary role of the "Communist" Party, U.S.A. revisionists, centrists such as the *Guardian* newspaper and "liberal appeasers" who in various ways promote, apologize for or obscure the danger of Soviet social-imperialism. These opportunists mask the reality of the treachery of Soviet social-imperialism and the danger of war, thus actually assisting and encouraging Soviet ambitions. They create confusion by making enemies into "friends."

The opportunist *Guardian*

In recent months, in the midst of growing clarity and opposition to Soviet social-imperialism, the *Guardian* newspaper has emerged as an especially active force covering for the Soviets and revisionists.

The *Guardian* is particularly despicable because it pretends to be Marxist-Leninist, anti-revisionist, anti-social-imperialist, a “friend” of China, etc. But the *Guardian*’s actual actions speak louder than its words. In fact, the *Guardian* because of its opportunist smokescreen, is able to promote Soviet social-imperialism better than such discredited and unpopular forces as the Communist Party, U.S.A., an unabashed supporter of Soviet hegemonism.

The *Guardian*’s stand has never been thoroughly Marxist-Leninist, but during the past several months it has mounted systematic campaign to support Soviet social-imperialism from Portugal to Angola behind a thoroughly dishonest and unprincipled attack on China’s foreign policy. The *Guardian* is despicable in that it fundamentally misrepresents and distorts China’s line. Not once for example during the past month’s tirade against China has the *Guardian* reprinted even one single article from China so that the *Guardian*’s readers could judge for themselves what is China’s position. Rather, the *Guardian* has opened its pages to obviously Trotskyite and outright revisionist views.

The *Guardian* engages in demogogy (such as accusing the U.S. Marxist-Leninist movement, which holds that capitalism has been fully restored in the Soviet Union, as “knee-jerking and genuflecting” toward China) in order to obscure the basic and decisive question: Is the Soviet Union a monopoly capitalist social-imperialist superpower? It is the *Guardian*’s position, which holds that the Soviet Union is not a capitalist superpower, which is at the heart of the differences.

The *Guardian* bases itself on eclecticism, a usual characteristic of centrism, which attempts to reconcile two mutually contradictory stands. The *Guardian* in opportunist fashion asserts in one breath that the Soviet Union is “social-imperialist” and a danger and that the CPSU is a revisionist party but then in the next breath maintains that the Soviet Union is a country with socialist relations as dominant. These two views are not compatible – how can there be a social-imperialist country run by a revisionist party, a capitalist party which is socialist at the same time? Such phantoms cannot exist in reality but only in the minds of opportunists such as the *Guardian*. The *Guardian*’s view of the Soviet Union is nothing but a confusing cover for its actual conciliation with and apology for social-imperialism.

Not content with slandering the Marxist-Leninist movement in the U.S. as a way to shield its defense of Soviet social-imperialism, the *Guardian* during the past several months is trying to slander China as a further way to shift attention away from the basic question of the restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and social-imperialism. In

particular, this “friend” of China has initiated a whole debate and attack not around Soviet foreign policy but China’s foreign policy.

The *Guardian* is thus objectively assisting Soviet aggression around the world and encouraging revolutionaries in the U.S. to unite with the CPUSA.

The current struggle around the Soviet Union and the international situation is not around secondary issues of importance but concern fundamental questions of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought – such as on the dictatorship of the proletariat, scientific versus petty bourgeois socialism, nature of imperialism, war and peace, etc. And this debate is integrally related to answering basic matters of the practical movement – who are our friends and enemies, our strategy and tactics, immediate tasks, etc. It is because of all this that the struggle around the Soviet Union and the international situation takes the character of increasingly differentiating the opportunist currents in the U.S. revolutionary movement from the Marxist-Leninists striving to forge a genuine communist party.

[Back to The New Communist Movement: Party Building Efforts Continue, 1975-1977](#)
[index page](#) | **[Back to the EROL homepage](#)**